



General Assembly

January Session, 2005

Raised Bill No. 6859

LCO No. 4176

04176_____HED

Referred to Committee on Higher Education and Employment
Advancement

Introduced by:
(HED)

***AN ACT CONCERNING A CAREER LADDER PROGRAM FOR
EDUCATION PARAPROFESSIONALS AND LOAN FORGIVENESS
FOR TEACHERS.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General
Assembly convened:

- 1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2005*) (a) There is established a
2 grant program to assist institutions of higher education that offer
3 baccalaureate degrees or higher and have teacher preparation
4 programs, in collaboration with local education agencies and other
5 organizations, including, but not limited to, businesses, institutions of
6 higher education offering associate degrees and teacher organizations,
7 to develop a career ladder program within their institutions for school
8 paraprofessionals with the goal of helping them become teachers.
- 9 (b) Institutions of higher education that develop such career ladder
10 programs shall, in the development of the program and recruitment
11 for the program, collaborate with local education agencies and
12 community organizations to ensure that their needs are met.
- 13 (c) The career ladder program shall provide:

14 (1) An option for program completion on a part-time basis with
15 flexibility to all for alternate semesters of coursework and student
16 teaching;

17 (2) A continuation of the school paraprofessional's benefit package
18 with the local education agency employing the school
19 paraprofessional;

20 (3) Support services, including, but not limited to, tutoring to meet
21 university requirements and course assignments, child care, career
22 counseling and financial aid guidance; and

23 (4) Mentoring during the first three years of teaching.

24 (d) Local education agencies collaborating with institutions of
25 higher education that develop such career ladder programs shall
26 recruit school paraprofessionals to enter the program, arrange for
27 administrative leave for school paraprofessionals participating in the
28 program and guarantee a provisional teaching position upon
29 completion of the program.

30 (e) Grants awarded to institutions of higher education that develop
31 such career ladder programs shall be used to pay for tuition for
32 participating school paraprofessionals, child care expenses of such
33 paraprofessionals, release time from local education agencies
34 employing such paraprofessionals, compensation for mentors, support
35 services under subsection (c) of this section, staff costs and stipends for
36 such paraprofessionals.

37 Sec. 2. Subsection (c) of section 10a-163 of the general statutes is
38 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
39 *1, 2005*):

40 (c) Full-time undergraduate students in their junior or senior years
41 and full-time graduate students who have been admitted to a teacher
42 education program approved by the State Board of Education and
43 accredited by the Board of Governors of Higher Education and which

44 prepares an individual for teaching in a field designated by the
45 Commissioner of Education as an area of critical teacher shortage shall
46 [within available appropriations,] be eligible for student loans under
47 this program in an amount not greater than five thousand dollars per
48 year for not more than two years.

49 Sec. 3. Section 10a-170h of the general statutes is repealed and the
50 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2005*):

51 Loan candidates shall make application to the Commissioner of
52 Higher Education on such forms and at such time as prescribed by said
53 commissioner. Loan recipients shall be selected by the Commissioners
54 of Education and Higher Education, provided said commissioners
55 shall consider affirmative action and equal opportunity goals when
56 selections are made. [In the event the number of eligible applicants is
57 in excess of the number of loans available, academic standing and
58 financial need may be considered by the commissioners in selecting
59 loan recipients.] Loans under this program shall be in an amount not
60 greater than five thousand dollars per year for not more than four
61 years for students attending independent colleges and universities and
62 not greater than three thousand dollars per year for not more than four
63 years for students attending public colleges and universities. In order
64 to maintain eligible status under this grant program, each recipient
65 shall continue to be enrolled in an accredited college or university and
66 shall demonstrate compliance with the academic standards established
67 by the Commissioners of Education and Higher Education through an
68 annual reapplication process, at such time and in such manner as
69 prescribed by the Commissioner of Higher Education. No student shall
70 receive the proceeds of a loan until said student has submitted a letter
71 from an accredited college or university certifying full-time
72 enrollment. [Sixty per cent of the loans awarded annually shall be
73 divided equally among the resident applicants of the state's five
74 congressional districts with the balance awarded on a state-wide basis.
75 If any of the loans designated for resident applicants of any one
76 congressional district are not accepted by a date to be determined by

77 the Commissioner of Higher Education, all such loans not accepted
78 shall be awarded on a state-wide basis.]

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2005</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2005</i>	10a-163(c)
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2005</i>	10a-170h

Statement of Purpose:

To establish a career ladder program for paraprofessionals and to increase the number of participants eligible for loan forgiveness programs for teachers.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]